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**GOVERNOR SCHWARZENEGGER PROCLAIMS MAY AS “MENTAL HEALTH MONTH”**

SACRAMENTO – Governor Schwarzenegger has proclaimed May as “Mental Health Month,” the California Department of Mental Health (DMH) announced today.

“By proclaiming May as Mental Health Month, the Governor reminds all Californians to take care of their mental health as a critical part of their overall well-being,” said Dr. Stephen Mayberg, director of DMH. “Too often we overlook the importance of emotional wellness and fail to recognize that our mental health is just as important as our physical health.”

Celebrated nationally since 1949, Mental Health Month’s themes and important dates include:

- **Mental illnesses are real, treatable, and surprisingly common.** One in five Californians will experience a mental illness at some time in their lives. Mental illness can be triggered by a chemical imbalance, a single traumatic event, or by normal, everyday stressors that go unchecked.
- **Make your own mental health a priority.** Talk to your healthcare provider about ways to manage stress – don’t allow it to become a chronic problem. By keeping your mind healthy, you’ll be happier and more productive.
- **There is no shame in asking for help.** Seeking help is a sign of strength, not weakness, and proper diagnosis is the first step toward wellness.

**May 9:** Childhood Depression Awareness Day. Materials are available from the National Mental Health Association ([www.nmha.org/may/index.cfm](http://www.nmha.org/may/index.cfm)).

**May 17:** DMH will formally launch the Network of Care for Mental Health ([www.networkofcare.org](http://www.networkofcare.org)), a comprehensive web site that offers tools such as a service directory of local mental health care providers, information about health coverage and insurance, a library of information about mental illnesses and mental health, and more.

**May 21-27:** National Schizophrenia Awareness Week, sponsored by the National Schizophrenia Foundation ([www.nsfoundation.org](http://www.nsfoundation.org)).

For more information about Mental Health Month events specific to your area, please contact your local county mental health department.